

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus, comprising:

a judging means for judging whether the amount of an electronic revenue stamp to be issued is equal to or less than a [possible amount to issue in which a] prepaid amount [is stored or not];

an issuing means for issuing said electronic revenue stamp as data on a document, said data containing [attached] a digital signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus [to] on a message [to be attached to said electronic revenue stamp], said message including the document which said electronic revenue stamp is attached to, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and an identifier of a receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, [in case that] if said amount of said revenue stamp is judged to be equal to or less than said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue]; and

a balance amount reducing means for reducing said amount of said electronic revenue stamp from said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue, when] if said electronic revenue stamp [was] is issued.

Claim 2 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

a verifying means, [when] wherein said verifying means receives a digital certificate from said receiver making an electronic revenue stamp invalid, containing [attached] a digital signature of said receiver, and verifies whether said digital certificate making said electronic stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver;

an amount increasing means for increasing said prepaid [possible] amount [to issue by said amount of said electronic revenue stamp made to be invalid]; and

an invalid electronic revenue stamp recording means for recording said digital certificate making an electronic revenue stamp invalid [that was made to be invalid].

Claim 3 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein:

said issuing means issues [said electronic revenue stamp as data attached said signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to an issued] an issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to [specify] said electronic revenue stamp, and said message includes said issue number [in addition to said message to be attached to said electronic revenue stamp, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and said identifier of said receiver of said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 4 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 2, wherein:

said verifying means[, when said verifying means receives said certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid attached said signature of said receiver,] verifies whether said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver and an [issued] issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus[, when said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus gives said issued number to said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 5 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 2, further comprising:

invalid electronic revenue stamp data [in which] for storing data of electronic revenue stamps made to be invalid [are stored].

Claim 6 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

an issued electronic revenue stamp recording means which records issued electronic revenue stamps; and

storing means for issued electronic revenue stamp data and invalid electronic revenue stamp data [in which data of said issued electronic revenue stamp data and electronic revenue stamps made to be invalid are stored when said electronic revenue stamps are made to be invalid].

Claim 7 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus in accordance with claim 2, wherein:

said verifying means verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is issued for an electronic revenue stamp issued by said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus and also issued by a receiver who is [an] a valid receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, and also verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid was not used before.

Claim 8 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method, comprising the steps of:

judging whether the amount of an electronic revenue stamp to be issued is equal to or less than a [possible amount to issue in which a] prepaid amount [is stored or not];

issuing said electronic revenue stamp as data on a document, said data containing [attached] a digital signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus [to] on a

message [to be attached to said electronic revenue stamp], said message including the document which said electronic revenue stamp is attached to, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and an identifier of a receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, [in case that] if said amount of said revenue stamp is judged to be equal to or less than said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue]; and

reducing said amount of said electronic revenue stamp from said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue, when] if said electronic revenue stamp [was] is issued.

Claim 9 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

when a digital certificate from said receiver making electronic revenue stamp invalid [attached] containing a digital signature of said receiver is received, verifying whether said digital certificate making said electronic revenue stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver;

increasing said prepaid [possible] amount [to issue by said amount of said electronic revenue stamp made to be invalid]; and

recording said digital certificate making an electronic revenue stamp invalid [that was made to be invalid].

Claim 10 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in with claim 8, wherein:

said issuing step issues [said electronic revenue stamp as data attached said signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to] an [issued] issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to [specify] said electronic revenue stamp, and said message includes said issue number [in addition to said message to be attached to said

electronic revenue stamp, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and said identifier of said receiver of said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 11 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 9, wherein:

said verifying step[, when said verifying step receives said certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid attached said signature of said receiver,] verifies whether said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver and an [issued] issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus[, when said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus gives said issued number to said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 12 (original). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 9, further comprising the step of:

storing invalid electronic revenue stamp data that are data of electronic revenue stamps made to be invalid.

Claim 13 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

recording issued electronic revenue stamps; and

storing issued electronic revenue stamp data and invalid electronic revenue stamp data [made to be invalid when said electronic revenue stamps are made to be invalid].

Claim 14 (currently amended). An electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 9, wherein:

said verifying step verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is issued for an electronic revenue stamp issued by said electronic revenue stamp issuing

apparatus and also issued by a receiver who is [an] a valid receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, and also verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid was not used before.

Claim 15 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing [A recording medium stored] a control program of an electronic revenue stamp issuing method, comprising the steps of:

judging whether the amount of an electronic revenue stamp to be issued is equal to or less than a [possible amount to issue in which a] prepaid amount [is stored or not];

issuing said electronic revenue stamp as data on a document, said data containing [attached] a digital signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus [to] on a message [to be attached to said electronic revenue stamp], said message including the document which said electronic revenue stamp is attached to, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and an identifier of a receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, [in case that] if said amount of said revenue stamp is judged to be equal to or less than said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue]; and

reducing said amount of said electronic revenue stamp from said [possible] prepaid amount [to issue, when] if said electronic revenue stamp [was] is issued.

Claim 16 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing [A recording medium stored] a control program of an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising the steps of:

when a digital certificate from said receiver making electronic revenue stamp invalid [attached] containing a digital signature of said receiver is received, verifying whether said digital certificate making said electronic revenue stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver;

increasing said prepaid [possible] amount [to issue by said amount of said electronic revenue stamp made to be invalid]; and

recording said digital certificate making an electronic revenue stamp invalid [that was made to be invalid].

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Claim 17 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing [A recording medium stored] a control program of an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said issuing step issues [said electronic revenue stamp as data attached said signature of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to] an [issued] issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus to [specify] said electronic revenue stamp, and said message includes said issue number [in addition to said message to be attached to said electronic revenue stamp, the amount of said electronic revenue stamp, and said identifier of said receiver of said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 18 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing a control program of [A recording medium stored] an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said verifying step[, when said verifying step receives said certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid attached said signature of said receiver,] verifies whether said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is valid or not by using said identifier of said receiver and an [issued] issue number [(a serial number)] of said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus[, when said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus gives said issued number to said electronic revenue stamp].

Claim 19 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing a control program of [A recording medium stored] a control program of an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising the step of:

storing invalid electronic revenue stamp data that are data of electronic revenue stamps made to be invalid.

Claim 20 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing a control program of [A recording medium stored] an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

recording issued electronic revenue stamps; and

storing issued electronic revenue stamp data and invalid electronic revenue stamp data [made to be invalid when said electronic revenue stamps are made to be invalid].

Claim 21 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing a control program of [A recording medium stored] an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said verifying step verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid is issued for an electronic revenue stamp issued by said electronic revenue stamp issuing apparatus and also issued by a receiver who is [an] a valid receiver of said electronic revenue stamp, and also verifies that said digital certificate making electronic revenue stamp invalid was not used before.

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Claim 22 (currently amended). A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for storing a control program of [A recording medium stored] a control program of an electronic revenue stamp issuing method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said program storage device storing [recording medium stored] said control program of said electronic revenue stamp issuing method is an IC card.